

REMARKS

Summary

The rejected claims have been canceled without prejudice and the allowable dependent claims have been redrafted in independent form. Therefore, the application is in condition for allowance.

Status of the Claims

Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, and 24-29 are pending. Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, and 18 have been redrafted in independent form, Claims 24-29 have been added, and Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-16 and 19-23 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, and 18 are independent.

Requested Action

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. In addition, Applicants respectfully request that this amendment be entered because it merely redrafts allowable dependent claims in independent form.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17 and 18 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. In response, these claims have been redrafted in independent form, thereby rendering them and

dependent Claims 24-29 allowable. In redrafting multiple dependent Claims 4, 10, and 17 in independent form, Applicants have added new dependent Claims 24 and 25, which correspond to previous Claims 4/2 and 4/3, Applicants have added new dependent Claims 26 and 27, which correspond to previous Claims 10/8 and 10/9, and Applicants have added new dependent Claims 28 and 29, which correspond to previous Claims 17/15 and 17/16.

Rejections

Claims 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1-3, 7-9, 14-16 and 21-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as being anticipated by the patent to Goldie (U.S. Patent No. 5,749,026). In addition, Claims 6, 12 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over the patent to Goldie in view of the patent to Ichizawa et al. (JP 05-224575). Claims 13/7 and 20/14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the patent to Goldie in view of the patent to Matsuzaki et al. (JP 2000-132040). Claims 13/12 and 20/19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the patent to Goldie in view of the patents to Ichizawa et al. and Matsuzaki et al.

Response to Substantive Rejection

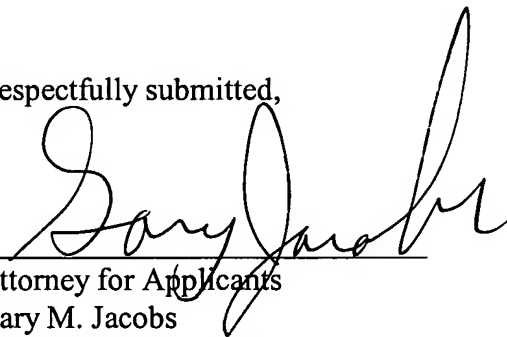
In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejections, Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-16 and 19-23 have been cancelled without prejudice and allowable dependent Claims 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, and 18 have been redrafted in independent form, thereby rendering the rejections moot.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary M. Jacobs", is written over a horizontal line.

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